

Projects and resources

How to make mourning dove nest cones

Mourning doves nest throughout California, particularly in valley, foothill and desert areas. Mourning doves do not build the sturdiest of nests, and poor weather conditions may cause natural dove nests to blow down or fall apart. To increase mourning doves' reproductive success and provide new nesting areas, Department of Fish and Game encourages the use of an artificial nest structure called a dove nest cone.

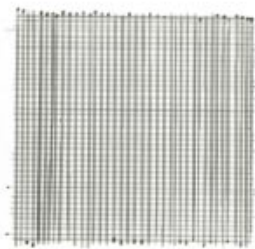
Doves nest in many kinds of trees and situations where they have good visibility and easy escape routes. Place your dove nest cone on a sturdy tree limb six to 18 feet above the ground to avoid predators. Make sure that the cone is firmly anchored into a place of sparse limb growth.

Mourning doves begin nesting in March with the peak breeding season occurring in July. It takes one to three days for the male to bring the nesting materials to the female, who then builds the nest. Doves typically lay two, white, one-inch long eggs per clutch and can lay two or three clutches per breeding season. It takes about a month for a pair of doves to raise one clutch. Males and females take turns incubating the eggs, which hatch in about two weeks.

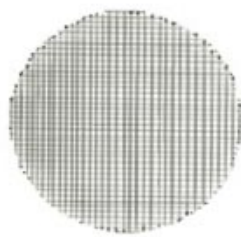
Other species of birds will benefit from the cones as well. *For more information on dove cone nests, call (530) 743-5068.*



Select the site for the nest in a moderate shade tree from six to 18 feet above the ground. Nest sites must have limb clearance for easy escape for doves. Tie nest into place and bend the edges of the nest down slightly after it is fastened to the tree or branch.



Cut out 12" square piece of hardware cloth



Trim the 12" square to form a circle



Cut out wedge shaped piece.



Close the wedge cut by overlapping the hardware cloth about 3" and tying to form the nest cone.